

Region 14: Commonwealth

Introduction

The Commonwealth Regional Council, formerly the Piedmont Planning District, lies in Virginia's Piedmont physiographic province. Rolling terrain and a rural countryside are the region's dominant characteristics. It comprises the counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward; the towns of Dillwyn, Phenix, Drakes Branch, Keysville, Charlotte Court House, Kenbridge, Victoria, Crewe, Burkeville, Blackstone, Farmville, and part of Pamplin.

The region experienced a 2.9% population growth rate between 2000 and 2005. Future growth is anticipated to be steady, with the population in the region projected to increase 15.2% to 111,900 in 2020 from its 2000 population level of 97,102.

The region is traversed by a large number of streams and rivers. Some of the more significant rivers include the Slate, Appomattox, Nottoway, James, Meherrin (also North, Middle and South Meherrin), Willis, Staunton, and North. The James and Appomattox rivers form the northern boundary of the region, while the Staunton and Meherrin rivers form the region's southern boundary. This richness in water resources has the potential to provide much water-related recreation, provided public access is available. There is a need for greater public access to this region's waters.

The region's combination of rolling terrain, numerous water bodies, rural land uses, open space and small communities creates pleasant visual impressions. Most of the region's roads are bordered by fields and forestland. State forests, parks, natural areas and wildlife management areas provide a core of publicly owned open space, natural resources and recreational opportunities. Three state wildlife management areas are: Amelia, Horsepen, and Briery Creek. State parks include Bear Creek Lake, James River, Twin Lakes, Staunton River Battlefield, and Holliday Lake State Parks, as well as the Sailor's Creek Battlefield, Staunton River Battlefield, and newly acquired High Bridge Trail State Parks. The Appomattox- Buckingham, Cumberland and Prince Edward-Gallion state forests are also located in the region.

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Recommendations applicable to all regions are found in this chapter's introduction entitled *Regional Analysis and Recommendations*. To meet needs established in the 2007 *Virginia Outdoors Plan* (2007 VOP), it is important to integrate these recommendations with those that follow for Region 17 into regional and local planning and development strategies. **End Textbox]**

Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation needs shift as lifestyles and demographics change. As populations increase, the need for outdoor recreation programs and facilities grow. Changing demographics can also impact the choice of leisure time activities demanded by citizens. The 2006 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* indicates that fewer people are participating in many outdoor recreation activities. It also shows that they are participating at a lower rate when compared to the results of the 2000 *Virginia Outdoors Survey*. While some of these differences may be explained by changes in the way survey questions were asked, a decline in outdoor recreation participation rates is indicated. Some possible explanations of this trend include lack of the following: access to recreation facilities close to home, well maintained and safe facilities, time or resources for leisure activities, and knowledge of the availability of outdoor recreation. Increased competition for leisure hours is especially evident when consideration is given to the broad availability of the Internet and other electronic individual and home media components that tend to keep people indoors and sedentary.

Based on input from public meetings, there is more need for transportation alternatives, specifically trails for walking, hiking and bicycling. If developed with multiple uses in mind, a comprehensive trail system could link small communities and specific destinations, thus providing exercise options and transportation alternatives. Safe cycling and walking opportunities should be provided for the entire community, but especially around Longwood University.

High use recreational activities include walking, driving for pleasure, water activities -- swimming, fishing and boating, use of playgrounds, bicycling and softball. The demand survey indicates a surplus of horseback riding trails, but there is a need for an equestrian campground in the region. The surplus of riding trails attracts equestrians to this region, further justifying the need for campgrounds for horse enthusiasts.

The following recommendations relative to the region's resources could contribute to regional open space and/or recreational opportunities to meet current and future needs of area residents.

Specific facility needs identified in the 2006 VOS include:

- Trails for walking, fitness and bicycling close to home
- Water access primarily for fishing, swimming, and boating
- Tent camping
- Additional basketball facilities
- Multipurpose fields for soccer, football, baseball, softball and other field sports
- Additional volleyball courts
- Playgrounds close to home
- Additional tennis courts
- Off-road motorcycling and four-wheel driving

According to the Commonwealth of Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, *Comparative Report on Local Government Revenues and Expenditures, Year Ended June 30, 2005*, per capita spending on parks and recreation for each locality in this region was: Amelia County, \$13.00; Buckingham County, \$5.50; Charlotte County, \$0.93; Cumberland County, \$2.95; Lunenburg County, \$0.00; Nottoway County, \$2.03; Prince Edward County, \$3.90; Town of Blackstone, \$61.50; And the Town of Farmville, \$1.32. The towns of Dillwyn, Phenix, Drakes Branch, Keysville, Charlotte Court House, Kenbridge, Victoria, Crewe, Burkeville and part of Pamplin were not listed in the report. This compares to a statewide per capita spending on parks and recreation of \$55.31, including \$85.51 from Towns, \$43.75 from counties, and \$76.45 per capita spending on parks and recreation from Cities in Virginia.

The following counties in the Commonwealth Region do not have a fulltime parks and recreation department, to provide related facilities and programs to their community: Charlotte County, Cumberland County, Lunenburg County, Nottoway County, and Prince Edward County.

Land Conservation

Land Conservation is receiving greater attention from Virginia residents as urban sprawl threatens the ecological health of natural systems, cultural resources and the beauty of the state's scenic landscapes. With population and associated development increasing at unprecedented rates, the conservation of farmland, parks, cultural resources and natural areas is essential to quality of life and economic viability of the state. Regional and local initiatives for land conservation are needed to save Virginia's outdoors.

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Land Trusts Operating in Region 14

- APVA Preservation Virginia
- The Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Civil War Preservation Trust
- The Conservation Fund
- The 500-Year Forest Foundation
- Friends of the Appomattox River
- James River Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- Roanoke River Rails to Trails, Incorporated
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation

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Land conservation recommendations include:

In PDC 14, the James River has been identified as in need of conservation measures to protect water quality and health of adjacent riparian lands.

In order to reduce the amount of development sprawl in PDC 14, a priority should be given to implementing conservation and land planning measures at the local and regional level.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure land planning strategically links linear corridors of land together maximizing environmental, ecological and human benefits. Preserving green infrastructure is cost effective and sustains natural resources, water quality and healthy communities. Green infrastructure planning at the local and regional levels is key to meeting the need for outdoor recreation and land conservation. Green infrastructure recommendations include:

- Develop a regional green infrastructure plan and promote the value of the planning model.

Programs

The following recommendations integrate statewide program initiatives into responsive regional strategies for outdoor recreation and conservation. The statewide program areas addressed in this section include: trails and greenways, blueways and water access, historic and landscape resources, scenic resources, Scenic Highways and Virginia Byways, Scenic Rivers, watersheds, environmental and land stewardship education, and the private sector. Recommendations are bulleted or numbered and are not sequenced by state or local priorities. Numbered recommendations are site specific to the regional map at the end of this section.

Trails and Greenways

Trails and greenways are critical for linking resources and providing green infrastructure in Virginia. Walking for pleasure is the most popular outdoor recreation activity. Due to a growing demand for walking close to home, trails and greenways should be a high priority.

- Support efforts of the Farmville Greenways Alliance and other trail groups, and expand these initiatives throughout the entire region.

Statewide Trunkline Trails

Trunkline trails are statewide corridors connecting urban, suburban and rural areas of Virginia. Plans to establish routes that connect with other local and regional trails are important to the

success of these major trails. When trails cross jurisdictional boundaries, local, regional and state planners should partner to provide information to the public and implement bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including signage and amenities.

The **James River Heritage Trail** is proposed to follow America's Founding River from the Chesapeake Bay to the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. The trail follows the old Kanawha Canal towpath, park trails, scenic riverside roadways and urban riverfront trails deep into the heart of Virginia.

The **Trans-Virginia Southern Trail** will stretch from the Cumberland Gap to the Chesapeake Bay. Comprised of many trails existing or underway, this network will connect the mountains to the sea and stimulate ecotourism across Southern Virginia. The Tobacco Heritage Trail will comprise a major segment of this trail.

Regional Trails

- **The Piedmont Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**, should guide efforts to improve bike and pedestrian facilities in the Commonwealth Region.

1. The **Dogwood Trail** in Farmville should be connected to the proposed Wilkes Lake Park Trail and the High Bridge Trail State Park along Buffalo Creek.
2. **The James River Heritage Trail** is proposed to follow America's Founding River from the Chesapeake Bay to the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. The trail follows the old Kanawha Canal towpath, park trails, scenic riverside roadways and urban riverfront trails deep into the heart of Virginia.
3. The **Cumberland-Appomattox Trail** in Cumberland and Buckingham counties would cross this region south of the James River.
4. **The Trans-Virginia Southern Trail** will stretch from the Cumberland Plateau to the Chesapeake Bay. Comprised of many trails existing or underway, including the Tobacco Heritage Trail, this network will connect the mountains to the sea and stimulate ecotourism across Southern Virginia.
5. **Interstate Bike Route 1** should be enhanced and properly identified.
6. **Twin Lakes State Park** should be considered for a stop on the African-American Trail.
7. **Highbridge Trail State Park** is a 33.8 mile stretch from near Burkeville to near Pamplin City and is planned to eventually connect with Appomattox Courthouse National Historic Park, Holliday Lake State Park, Featherfin Wildlife Management Area, Sailor's Creek State Park, Twin Lakes State Park, and the Tobacco Heritage Trail near Meherrin.
8. **The Tobacco Heritage Trail** is being developed by converting several abandoned railroads into trails. Components in the region include portions of the Virginian Railroad.

Water Access

Blueways and water access are critical in a water rich state such as Virginia. Water access should be a high priority for public acquisition. Water access recommendations include:

- Expand canoe access by developing parking and launch facilities at bridge crossings.
- Encourage conservation easements that allow public access.
- Provide access to Virginia's rivers and streams at approximately five-mile intervals to meet water-related recreational demands.
- Create portages, where appropriate, around dams and other river obstacles.

9. **The Appomattox River Blueway** should be developed in this Region.
10. Additional access is needed on the **James, Appomattox, Staunton and Slate rivers**, as well as all canoe-able streams in the region.
11. The **Amelia Wildlife Management Area** has the potential to accommodate primitive canoe-in only camping and picnicking, as a part of the Appomattox River Blueway.

Historic and Landscape Resources

Virginia is rich in historic and landscape resources. As Virginia's population swells, links to the past that ground the Commonwealth's sense of place become increasingly threatened. Visiting historic places is the third most popular outdoor recreation opportunity. Attracting a significant number of tourists and establishing these cultural resources as valuable parts of local economics are essential.

Historic and landscape resources recommendations include:

- Support Civil War Battlefield protection efforts
- Protect Civil Rights in Education sites
- There is a critical need for county-wide surveys of historic and architectural resources in Amelia, Buckingham, and Prince Edward counties.
- There is a critical need for archaeological surveys in Amelia, Charlotte, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edwards counties as well as for archaeological assessments of the archaeological resources in these five counties.

Scenic Resources

Management of Virginia's scenic resources is linked to economic prosperity of the state as it relates to tourism and the overall aesthetic character of the Commonwealth for business, industry and residents. It also reflects the ecological health of the region.

Scenic Highways/Virginia Byways

Opportunities to traverse Virginia's scenic and cultural landscapes are made possible by the Scenic Highway and Virginia Byway road designations. Such roads support driving for pleasure as the third most popular outdoor recreation activity.

There has been a tremendous interest in thematic trails including, Civil War trails, the Wilderness Road Trail, the Birding and Wildlife Trails, the Revolutionary War trails, the African-American Heritage Trail system, and other driving tour routes. The next logical step after the *Scenic Roads in Virginia* map would be to develop a series of regional maps or booklets that describe and help locate the resources and services found in all sections of the state. In this region, the Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail, Lee's Retreat and the Wilson-Kautz Raid Trail should be supported and promoted for their historical/educational value and as a tourism driver.

The following road segments have been recommended for consideration as Virginia Byways:

12. **Route 15** south of Farmville in Prince Edward County.
13. A portion of **Route 460** in Northern Prince Edward County.
14. **Route 626** in Appomattox and Buckingham Counties.

Scenic Rivers

Virginia's Scenic Rivers Program recognizes significant natural, scenic, recreational and cultural values of the state's rivers. A discussion about the program's purpose, benefits and designation process is found in the Scenic Rivers section of Chapter VII. River resources are a critical component of natural resource planning. Scenic Rivers are categorized as "designated, qualified or potential."

In order to more successfully protect river resources, the following recommendations are given:

15. The **Staunton River** from Route 761 (Long Island) to Route 360. Impacts to the Staunton River from proposed commercial development along the riverbanks should be carefully evaluated. As a state Scenic River, the Staunton River should be protected as a unique regional

resource. Inappropriate development that compromises the scenic qualities of the river and the enjoyment of its natural beauty should be discouraged. Appropriate setbacks and buffers should be incorporated into plans to assure the preservation of the river corridor. This will include consideration for impacts to water quality.

16. The **North Meherrin River** from the Route 712 Bridge to the junction of the South Meherrin River. Impacts to the North Meherrin River from proposed commercial development along the riverbanks should be carefully evaluated. As a state Scenic River, the North Meherrin River should be protected as a unique regional resource. Inappropriate development that compromises the scenic qualities of the river and the enjoyment of its natural beauty should be discouraged. Appropriate setbacks and buffers should be incorporated into plans to assure the preservation of the river corridor. This will include consideration for impacts to water quality.

The following river segments qualify for designation as Virginia Scenic Rivers:

17. The **James River** from Wingina to Maidens.
18. The **Staunton River** from Route 360 to Staunton River State Park.
19. The **Meherrin River** from the North Meherrin confluence to the Brunswick County line.
20. The **Appomattox River** from Route 612 to Route 608, in Prince Edward and Buckingham Counties.
21. The **Slate River** from Route 20 to the James River, in Buckingham County.

The following river segments are potential Virginia Scenic Rivers and should be evaluated to determine suitability for designation:

22. The **Appomattox River** from Route 608 to the Powhatan County line.
23. The **James River** from Bent Creek to Wingina, in Buckingham County.

Watershed Resources

Most Virginians understand the importance of watersheds and that human health is directly related to the health of water resources. All watersheds are linked to one another uniting communities, natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities across jurisdictional boundaries.

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Watershed groups in Region 14

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Clean Virginia Waterways
James River Association
Middle James Roundtable
Roanoke River Basin Association
Virginia Conservation Network

Watershed recommendations for this region include:

- Conserve areas around Roanoke Creek

Environmental and Land Stewardship Education

An informed citizenry, with knowledge of resources and their need for long-term sustainability, is essential to good planning and management for outdoor resource and conservation lands. Environmental and land stewardship education must be incorporated into planning and outreach at all levels of government.

Environmental and land stewardship recommendations for this region include:

-Expanding environmental education in the region by providing more opportunities at the region's vast public natural areas and parks, including the state parks, state forests, and wildlife management areas.

Federal Programs

Federal facilities providing regional outdoor recreation opportunities may include those managed by the National Park Service, the U. S. Forest Service and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

National Parks

The following are general National Parks Recommendations for the Commonwealth Region:

- Continue to develop multi-modal connections to NPS sites, as a component of an interconnected, statewide system of trails and greenways. Support efforts underway at parks such as Petersburg, Appomattox, and Richmond that are currently engaged in efforts to link battlefields, historic sites, parks, and communities.
- Continue to work with state agencies to elevate battlefield protection in various land conservation, scenic viewshed, and heritage preservation initiatives. Utilizes partnerships to identify, prioritize, and develop strategies to protect critical resources.

National Forests (USFS)

Other Federal Facilities (Military)

24. **Fort Pickett** was turned over to the Virginia National Guard and the Re-Use Authority to operate beginning in 1997. The property offers the opportunity for increased public recreation use in a number of outdoor activities. Every effort should be made to maintain and expand the numerous recreational activities currently available, such as hunting, fishing and hiking.

State Facilities & Programs

State facilities providing regional outdoor recreation opportunities may include Virginia's state parks, wildlife management areas, state forests and natural area preserves. In addition, transportation programs influencing outdoor recreation and accessibility to Virginia's outdoors are discussed. Other state-owned lands that have potential for providing outdoor recreation areas are addressed in this section as well.

State Parks

Projects identified in approved master plans need to be funded. State park master plans must be revisited by DCR staff every five years; any significant changes not identified in the current, approved master plan, or improvements/additions costing in excess of \$500,000, must go through the public participation process.

25. **Bear Creek Lake State Park** (326 acres) located in Cumberland County and surrounded by the Cumberland State Forest. The park has a 40 acre lake available for swimming, fishing and boating. The 2002 GOB provided funds to construct one 6-bedroom lodge, 10 2-bedroom cabins, 2 3-bedroom cabins, and a meeting facility with a kitchen. The park has traditionally offered 53 campsites with a mix of full service hook ups and tent sites, picnicking, swim beach and concession, and boat rentals. The park has over 6 miles of hiking trails and also provides links to the Willis River Trail and Cumberland Multi-use trail located in the state forest. Also through the 2002 GOB, the park received funds to construct new and renovate existing trails.

26. **Holliday Lake State Park** (255 acres) located in Appomattox County and surrounded by the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. The park has a 150 acre lake which is available for swimming, boating and fishing. Existing park facilities include a 30-site campground, a large shaded picnic area, two picnic shelters, two playgrounds, a boat ramp, a seasonal full-service concession stand and camp store, and boat rentals. Through the 2002 GOB, the park will be getting a campground expansion and funds to enhance the trail system. The park has five hiking trails and one aquatic trail. Lakeshore Trail is a 6.3-mile hiking trail that loops around the lake and the Holliday Lake 4-H Educational Center. A trailhead for the Carter Taylor can also be found in the park. This trail is a 12-mile loop in the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest for hikers, bicycle riders and horseback riders.

27. **James River State Park** (1525 acres) located in Buckingham County. The park was acquired with funds from the 1992 General Obligation Bond. With 3 fishing ponds, 3 miles of riverfront, 2 primitive campgrounds, one on the river and the other on one of the larger ponds, and 2 boat launches, water access and water views are a primary focus of the park offerings. In addition, the park offers 2 picnic areas and 6 shelters and 20 miles of trails for hiking, biking and equestrian use. The 2002 GOB has provided funds for several new park facilities, which include 16 cabins and 2 6-bedroom lodges, a third campground with full service hook ups, an equestrian campground and an office / visitor center complex, as well as trail improvements.

28. **Sailor's Creek Battlefield State Park** (321 acres) located in Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward counties. Placed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks in 1985, the park was the scene of the last major battle of the Civil War. On April 6, 1865, also referred to as Black Thursday of the Confederacy, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia lost 7,700 men, including eight generals. This defeat was key to Lee's decision to surrender at Appomattox Courthouse 72 hours later, ending the war in Virginia. Period costumed interpreters commemorate the event and conduct other living history events throughout the year. The Hillsman House, used as a field hospital during the battle, is open to visitors. The park is also a stop on the Lee's Retreat Driving Tour. Through the 2002 GOB, funding was provided for a visitor center and support facility, to renovate the Hillsman House, and to enhance the trails within the park.

29. **Staunton River Battlefield State Park** (300 acres) located in Charlotte and Halifax Counties. The park is split by the Staunton River, and includes a .8 mile segment of abandoned rail trail that crosses the Staunton River Bridge and travels past the Randolph Depot. The visitor center was opened in 1995 as a result of a unique partnership between Virginia State Parks, Virginia Power, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative and the Historic Staunton River Foundation. The park also includes Mulberry Hill, which was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 for its significance as the home of Judge Paul Carrington, who was a distinguished jurist and leader of the independence movement in Virginia in the late 1700's. Mulberry Hill also played a prominent role in the Battle of Staunton River Bridge during the Civil War in 1864. The park offers hiking, bicycle, self-guided historical and nature trails. A picnic area and shelter are also available. Through the 2002 GOB, funding was available to renovate Mulberry Hill and to construct an equestrian facility.

30. **High Bridge Trail State Park** (approximately 600 acres) is an abandoned railroad right of way that was donated by Norfolk & Southern Railway Company (NSR) to the Department of Conservation and Recreation for development as a state park. The trail is 33.8 miles located between Burkesville in Nottoway County, extending northwest into Cumberland and Prince Edward Counties, through the Town of Farmville, and west to a point east of Pamplin City. Originally, the rail line was a portion of the Petersburg to Lynchburg rail line constructed by Southside Railroad Company from 1849 to 1854. The railroad right of way has a typical width of

approximately 80 feet and is wider in areas that were necessary for construction of the railway. The right of way ranges in width from 80 to 200 feet with an average of 125 feet to 150 feet. A master plan has been developed which describes proposed future development for the site. Initial funding for development of the park would be from grants and a special appropriation by the 2007 General Assembly.

31. **Twin Lakes State Park** (495 acres) is centrally located in Prince Edward County and was originally acquired in 1939 from local farmers. During the time of segregation in the south (1950), the property was split into 2 parks, Prince Edward State Park for Negroes and Goodwin Lake State Recreational Area, which served whites. Each park consisted of a lake for swimming and fishing, a camping area, and a picnic area. In 1964, the 2 were merged back into one park, and given the current name in 1986. The park offerings today still include swimming, fishing, and camping, as well as cabins, trails, 2 boat launches, and a conference center, which has 3 meeting rooms, a full service kitchen and dining area. Through the 2002 GOB, funding has been allocated for a maintenance area and residence. Because of its unique history, efforts should be made to include the park as a stop on the African American Trail.

State Forests

32. Continue development of the Appomattox to Cumberland hiking trail in the **Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest**.

33. Expand bicycling and hiking opportunities in **Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest**.

34. Establish a comprehensive program between Virginia Department of Forestry and DCR to preserve, develop and interpret the **Camp Gallion CCC** (Civilian Conservation Corp) in Gallion State Forest.

State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA)

DGIF maintains a statewide network of 35 management areas totaling more than 197,000 acres. These lands are purchased and maintained with hunting, fishing and trapping license fees and with Wildlife Restoration Funds.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries should continue to develop trail systems within wildlife management areas to facilitate access for activities other than hunting and fishing.

35. The **Amelia Wildlife Management Area** in Amelia County has the potential to accommodate additional recreational development, such as trails and river access opportunities, which would be beneficial in meeting some of the recreational needs in Region 2 (Cumberland Plateau) to the east.

36. The **Featherfin Farm Wildlife Management Area** was acquired by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) in 2005. The parcel, located about 10 miles west of Farmville, consists of approximately 2,800 acres and borders more than 10 miles of the Appomattox River in Prince Edward, Appomattox, and Buckingham counties. The property has a long-established hunting heritage, and will be included in the VDGIF's Quota Hunting system, which requires hunters to apply pre-season and be selected by random drawing to hunt. This largely wooded tract provides a diversity of rolling piedmont habitats that support upland species such as deer, turkeys, squirrels and an occasional bear, and it includes approximately 300 acres of fields and woodland edges that provide habitat for rabbits, quail and other small game. A variety of other wildlife also occurs on the property, which promises to provide good wildlife viewing opportunities.

State Natural Area Preserves

There are currently no dedicated natural area preserves within the Commonwealth Regional Council. The Department of Conservation and Recreation has, as of November 2006, documented 142 occurrences of 81 rare species and natural communities in the Commonwealth Regional Council. Twenty-five species are globally rare and five are federally threatened or endangered. Forty-seven conservation sites have been identified in the district. Twenty-five sites (53%) have received some level of protection through ownership or management by state, federal and non-government organizations. However, no sites are protected well enough to ensure the long-term viability of the rare species and natural communities they support.

DCR recommends that all unprotected conservation sites, and all unprotected portions of partially protected sites, be targeted for future land conservation efforts. The appropriate method of protection will vary with each site but may include placing the site on Virginia's Registry of Natural Areas, developing a voluntary management agreement with the landowner, securing a conservation easement through a local land trust, acquiring the site through a locality or local land trust, dedicating the site as a natural area preserve with the current owner, or acquiring the site as a state-owned natural area preserve.

Within Region 17, DCR is particularly interested in protecting:

- Significant communities and rare species habitats along the Nottoway River in Lunenburg and Nottoway counties
- Piedmont hardpan forest and Piedmont savannah communities
- Granite flatrock communities

Transportation Programs

Transportation is integral to conservation and outdoor recreation. Recommendations relating to transportation for the region include:

Virginia is home to more of the United States Numbered Bicycle Route system than any other state. Since both USBR 1 and USBR 76 cross the state, Virginia hosts about 41 percent of the total USBR system. USBR 1 crosses the state north-south from Arlington to the North Carolina border near Kerr Reservoir, and USBR 76 crosses east-west from Yorktown to the Kentucky border in Dickenson County. These federal routes are officially recognized by AASHTO, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. These routes are shown on VDOT's official County Maps, and signed in the field.

In addition, Virginia also hosts parts of three other long-distance bicycle routes recognized by Adventure Cycling Association, which is dedicated to establishing a national system of long-distance routes. The Trans-America Bicycle Trail crosses the country from Oregon to Virginia, and shares the same alignment as USBR 76 in Virginia. The Maine to Virginia Bicycle Route runs approximately 150 miles from Washington, D.C. to Virginia, generally along the same alignment as USBR 1, and the Virginia to Florida Bicycle Route covers 130 miles from Richmond to the North Carolina state line at Suffolk.

Other State Lands

The following state-owned lands contain significant undeveloped open space that may have some potential for local recreational use. Each site should be assessed and, where appropriate, a cooperative agreement should be developed to make these resources available for local use as parks and open space.

Parks & Recreation Departments

Local & regional parks & recreation recommendations include:

- The counties of Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward do not have a fulltime parks and recreation department to provide related facilities and programs to their community. These localities should consider committing resources to developing a parks and recreation department in order to garner the myriad of benefits it can provide to citizens.

37. Localities should consider transforming old school sites and other abandoned public sites for public parks and recreational use. An example of a worthwhile project is the 9.25 acre **Buckingham Training School** site in Dillwyn, Virginia, to be adaptively re-used as a community park. This site of the first African-American High School in Buckingham County (1923) will be restored and conserved for its historic and recreational value.

Private Sector

Much of the demand for outdoor recreation is met by the private sector. Because of the abundance of water resources in the region, there are a number of water-based recreational opportunities that could be explored. The following recommendations pertain to this region:

There are a number of streams and rivers in this region and a need for greater access to the waters. The private sector has an opportunity to provide the needed access to meet public demand, and the opening of private land could provide opportunities for camping and bank fishing. To help meet the demand for recreational facilities, opportunities exist for private investment in golf courses, tennis courts and swimming pools. These can often be provided as amenities in housing developments, through swim and racquet clubs, or as a result of public-private partnerships. There is a need to provide areas for the use of 4-wheel-drive off-road recreational vehicles. This may be an opportunity for the private sector to make use of lands for recreation that may not be productive for other uses.

The new High Bridge Trail State Park will create a demand for campgrounds and cabins for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. Bicycle rentals, horse liverys, and bed and breakfasts are examples of business opportunities the new park will foster.

Captions for photos

Region 14 Photo 1 – xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Photo by xxx ssss

Region 14 Photo 2 - xxxxx. Photo by xxxxxxxx.

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